

THE

Northamptonshire

TRAGEDY.

In FOUR PARTS.



TEWKESBURY.

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T H E

Northamptonshire Tragedy, &c.



P A R T I.

YOU Lovers lend an ear, I'm sure you'll shed a tear,
When you the same shall hear which I unfold,
'Twill make your heart to bleed, when farther I proceed,
A dismal story sure as e'er was told.

In fair Northamptonshire, as I to you declare,
There liv'd two Noblemen of vast estates,
Each had a daughter dear, as for a truth we hear,
But yet, alas! unhappy was their fates.

One was of beauteous mould, the other as 'tis told,
Was much deform'd, and much inferior too,
The other a beauty clear, but you soon shall hear,
Her craftiness did this lady quite undo.

A noble knight of fame, to court this beauty came;
Protesting if she would not grant him her love,
He was ruin'd quite, no comfort day or night,
O ease me of my pain ye powers above.

Why did this lovely fair, my tender heart ensnare?
O Cupid let your tender arrows fly,
And wound her heart as mine, and make her be as kind,
For if she will not love for her I die.

At last as we do find, he to her told his mind,
Who courteously to him this answer made:
Your suit I must deny, kind sir, I tell you why,
I think I am too young as yet to wed.

But lovely maid, said he, can you thus cruel be,
Let not those charming eyes such darts let fly;

● cure a love-sick heart, and ease me of my smart,
Or else for you my dearest love I die.

Sir, tell me not of love, you may unconstant prove,
I know such things they are often found;

My years they are too green, I am not yet fifteen,
I'm sure I do know what love doth mean.

Thus night and day would he with this lady be,
At last she did consent to be his bride:

First ask my father pray, let him appoint the day,
And if he's willing I am satisfied.

O charming sound I hear, that you'll be my dear,
Thou beauteous goddess whom I adore:

Since you are constant at last, now my sorrows past,
Instead of grief, I now have comfort store.

He to her father went, and asked his consent,
Immediately to him thus did say;

She is too young indeed, it must be thus agreed,
If that you have her you for her must stay.

With all my heart he cried, if she is my bride;
I do not mind how long for her I stay:

'Tis she I do adore, and shall for ever more,
With kisses sweet they pass'd the time away.



P A R T II.

OBERVE the Second Part, how he did her betray,

Her heart he stole away, and then defil'd
Her lovely body too, which prov'd her overthrow,
For she alas! by him did prove with child.

Soon as he knew the same, he left the lovely dame,
And to her neighbour a courting did go -

Tho' crooked and deform'd, for her this beauty scorn'd,
Which caus'd her lovely eyes with tears to flow.

Letters she oft did send with expressions kind,
Saying what do you mean, dear love I pray,

That you do me fly, and will not me come nigh,
O cruel man my heart thus to betray.

No answer she receiv'd, from her love indeed,
 At length unto the coachman she did say,
 Dear John, one thing I crave, I'll make you fine and brave,
 If you'll my council keep and not betray,

This diamond ring so bright, bear to the gallant knight,
 Brave Stanford that sweet name it doth bear,
 Also this letter pray, give to him this day,
 Or else my heart in pieces I must tear.

The coachman was amaz'd, and on his lady gaz'd:
 Unto the perjur'd knight away he went,
 His message did declare: Go tell your lady fair,
 To come this day to her was my intent.

Soon as he did come, he approach'd the room,
 The charming lady's bloom like roses sweet,
 Her crimson cheeks forsook, e'er a word she spoke,
 In a swoon she dropt down at his feet.

He strove her to revive, and finding her alive;
 What means you grief, I beg now let me hear,
 Her lilly hands she wrung, 'tis a deluding tongue,
 O pity me for my sweet infant dear.

It's striving in my womb, perform your promise, come
 Blast not my honour, hide my shame I pray,
 Look on the ring I beg, think on the oath you made,
 Which you swore to me both night and day.

With countenance most grim, he at her eay the ring,
 Think not that I vile wretch th' loss deplore,
 No more thy face I'll see, no more send to me,
 I will not own a bastard nor a whore.

Good people do but think, what grief she underwent,
 To hear this perjur'd creature thus degrade,
 Her charms unto her face, who did her thus disgrace,
 Whose flattery at first her heart betray'd.

At last her father dear, beheld his daughter fair,
 With sorrow overflow'd, to her he said,
 What ails my daughter dear, do pray let me hear:
 The reason I must know this very day.

I'm very ill she cry'd, let me not be deny'd,
 One thing that I desire dear father pray,

That I to take the air, may to my aunt's repair,
If not my father's will must be obey'd.

P A R T III.

HER father did consent, she to her aunt's was sent,
Her coach to attend on her also:
Her aunt did quickly spy, wherein her grief did lie,
And the truth she quickly then did know.
Her aunt was just and good, her best friend she stood,
At last the time was come, this lady fair,
Must delivered be; a lovely son, had she,
Which was much cause to her of grief and care.
As she delivered were, she call'd the coachman there,
To heaven made him swear, for to be true;
Here take these guineas bright, go to the false knight,
And give to him these rings and letter too.
Soon to the knight he went, and gave the things she sent,
Who open'd the same, it did unfold;
When he had read the same, a treacherous laugh did frame,
Saying, I do wonder at this strumpet bold.
Me of her son to tell, I wish they were in hell,
I think it would be well if they were there;
So tell her what I say, and come no more I pray,
So then in pieces the letter he did tear.
He to the lady came, and told her of the same;
O creature most profane, my infant dear,
May rest in heaven high, while thy sad soul doth fry,
In cruel torment where you wish we were.
In bitter grief she lay, tormented night and day,
At length her infant died by her side,
This made her grief the more, she kiss'd it o'er and o'er,
My father I will see whate'er betide.
At length she weary grew, I'll to my father go,
Dear aunt I pray let none the secret know;
So farwell, she cried, let heaven be your guide,
I'll seek for him that caus'd my overthrow.

She to her father came, which did her entertain,
Most lovingly, saying, my daughter dear,
I'm glad to see you well, strange news I have to tell,
Your love is married this day I do declare.

She seemed discontent, and from her father went,
Ye furies now come strike unto my brain,
Some curst invention pray, to take his life away;
And let me be reveng'd for his disdain.

Her lover as we hear, did each day repair,
To take the air within a silent grove;
To pass the time away, read some diverting play,
He'd sit and let his wandering fancy rove.

She understood the same, and calling to her man;
And smiling unto him, she thus did say,
Stanford as I do hear, does to a grove repair,
A project is come in my head this day.

I'll get a Friar's dress, a visit I'll protest,
I am resolv'd unto him to pay.
And crave his charity, while he does look on me,
I'm sure to speak to him I'll find a way.

The dress she did prepare, with things fit and rare,
Her coachman ready in the afternoon,
Drove down a narrow lane, behind the grove it came,
Now stop, said she; You'll see the fancy soon.

Out of the coach she came, the Friar's dress put on,
And when she had disguis'd herself all o'er,
A curious basket fine, she round her arm did twine,
Then went his charity for to implore.

Most noble knight so brave, your charity I crave,
I hope you'll me relieve before you go;
Yes, that I will, said he, but pray now let me see,
Methinks I something of that voice do know.

She by his side did stand, and took him by the hand,
And with the other out a pistol drew:
And let it off with speed, to do this wicked deed,
The bullet went his body through and through,
He fell down dead indeed, she stript the Friar's weed,
Now Stanford's worthy friends behold 'tis I;

Have done this bloody deed, caused thy heart to bleed,
Now thou art rewarded for thy treachery.

She cast her Fair's weed over her head with speed,
Her coachman saw the thing that she had done;
He trembled every limb, and straitway took her in,
And then like lightening homeward he drove.

But as they drove along, the coach did overturn,
A most unhappy doom, this lady she,
Her arm did break in two, the coachman's leg also,
In misery they lay 'till afternoon.

The first that saw them there, was a servant we hear,
Of the murder'd knight, a coming there;
To fetch his master dear, fearing this lady fair,
Had by some false traitors been misus'd.

Then turning back again, he found his master slain,
So going home to tell this fatal news,
And all that there were, thought this lady fair,
Carried them to her father I declare,

The lady of this knight, unto her bore a spite,
And had her apprehended out of hand;

She did confess the deed, and soon told with speed,
And the whole truth she let them understand.

She was condemn'd to die, her father's gold did fly,
Like chaff before the wind her life to save;

It would not save her life, for the knights cruel wife,
She said, her life, her life, is all I crave,

The fatal day was come, she must receive her doom,
When thousands went to hear what she did say;

When she came to the tree, both old and young said she,
Now warning take by me this very day,



P A R T IV.

FIRST parents have a care, if e'er your children dear,
Think fit to marry, do not them deny,
For fear that love at last should all their glory blast,
As may be seen by this sad destiny.

Next maidens all beware, and have a special care,
 Of mens deceitful tongues, that flattering train;
 For if you do consent, to your great discontent,
 When they have you betray'd, they will you disdain;
 Likewise false men I say, beware how you betray,
 Poor innocents, it may be your ruin;
 When 'ove does turn to hate, the malice is so great
 That your destruction does your fancy prove.
 As for example, I poor wretched soul must die,
 The deed I don't deny, for I did kill
 The man I lov'd so dear, who scorn'd my beauty fair,
 For one that was deform'd, but yet I still
 Unto the world must own, my heart is with him gone,
 O welcome death! come execute I pray;
 The tragic part perform, O Lord, I come, I come,
 O Lord, receive my soul that's gone astray,
 After she had spoke, the hangman fix'd the rope,
 The cart it drew away, the earth it shook,
 The cries they were so great, that the people did make,
 Thus this lady fair the world forlook.

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F I N I S.